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'Jamming' Eyed In Loss of Snark

WASHINGTON — A prowling Russian submarine may have caused that mysterious runaway of an Air Force Snark missile during a long-range test.

The Navy has positively established that a Red sub was within 100 miles of the point where something went amiss, causing this intercontinental guided missile to continue roaring through space instead of making a pre-set turn.

The "home controls" of the snark could readily have been jammed by equipment for this purpose on the lurking Soviet sub.

The baffling loss of this missile raises two disturbing questions:

(1) Are Russian subs secretly cruising the Air Force's far-flung Atlantic testing range to check on the number and type of guided missiles being tried out there?

(2) If doing this, are the Reds themselves conducting tests of missile - jamming equipment aboard these prowling subs?

Both the Air Force and Navy are busy seeking answers to these two highly important "capabilities." So far the following publishable information can be reported:

The lost Snark may have established a distance record for guided missiles.

Here's how that's deduced: The Air Force tracked the missile 2,000 miles before it soared beyond the available radar coverage. At that time the Snark was speeding at 700 mph, with two hours of fuel still left. Assuming the flight continued until this remaining fuel was exhausted, the missile would have traveled more than 3,400 miles.

That would be a new record, as the previous greatest distance covered by a Snark was 2,200 miles.

A belated effort was made to shoot down the missile when it got out of control.

This happened after it had flown 1,000 miles and the mechanisms set to cause a turn in course failed to respond to "home controls." Whether this unusual failure was due to deliberate jamming or some other causes is still unknown.

When it occurred, a jet fighter attempted to intercept and destroy the Snark. But it had too great a head start, and the interceptor had to turn back for lack of fuel.

Exact location of where the missile crashed is still uncertain.

The widely-publicized report that it was in Brazilian jungle was pure surmise. It could have been in the Atlantic. That's where the Snark was headed when it failed to turn and was still flying after another 1,000 miles (for a total of 2,000) and got beyond radar tracking.

The Air Force's vast missiles testing range is wholly over water. It extends from Patrick Air Base, Cape Canaveral, Fla., to Ascension Island, in the middle of the South Atlantic between Brazil and the West Coast of Africa. In recent months, Russian submarines have been sighted in these international waters, which are open to all nations.

This particular Snark is the first of a number tested to fail to respond to "home controls" and to vanish beyond radar scope.

Others have crashed for various reasons in the Atlantic. But in all these instances the turning mechanism functioned. The mysteriously-lost missile is the first in which it didn't.

That's why Air Force and Navy experts are convinced this was no accident, especially now that it's positively known a Russian sub was within jamming range.

The Snark, technically known as a "high subsonic, air-breathing, intercontinental guided missile," is actually a non-piloted plane. It is 74 feet long, 15 feet high, and has a 42-foot wing spread. It's already being out-dated by other missiles soon to be tested.

ON ACTIVE DUTY — Gen. Bevell Smith is becoming a White House assistant after all.

President Eisenhower's renowned wartime chief of staff is definitely going back to active duty

with contending this would impair his direct access to and influence with the President on policy questions.

To avoid creating a personnel problem, the President postponed his plan to make Smith his personal coordinator of the State and Defense Departments and Central Intelligence Agency.

But with Hoover departing early next year, the President is going ahead with his original plan.

Both Secretary Dulles and Gov. Christian Herter, who will succeed Hoover, are wholly agreeable to that. They have been informed of the President's decision, and heartily approved it as a sound and desirable measure.

Smith is already tackling his important new work.

He is now spending several days a week at the White House on special intelligence and other assignments from the President. It is deemed highly probable by insiders that Smith's functions will include missions to Europe, where he has extensive personal connections with top civilian and military authorities.

Note: Gen. Omar Bradley also is returning to Washington to live. But the one-time chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is not coming back to take a new job. He and Mrs. Bradley are moving from California solely to be closer to their grandchildren. Their daughter and her family reside in Virginia.

with him in January. Date they have tentatively agreed on is Jan. 16, a week before the inauguration.

In Smith's new official role he will be the President's personal coordinator of matters relating to the State and Defense Departments and Central Intelligence Agency.

All of them have been served in by Smith. He is a retired four-star Army general, was ambassador to Russia 1946-49, undersecretary of state 1953-54 and director of the Central Intelligence Agency 1950-53. At present Smith is vice chairman of American Machine & Foundry Co.

There is special significance behind this impending high-powered addition to the President's staff.

It means reversing a previous decision about bringing Smith to the White House. The President proposed that shortly after Secretary Dulles was operated on for abdominal cancer. But Acting Secretary of State Herbert Hoover Jr. vigorously objected. He is credited by administration insiders